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SIPDIS

DEPT FOR EUR/CE
STATE FOR OES/IHB
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USDA PASS TO APHIS
HHS PASS TO CDC
HHS FOR OGHA

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: AUSTRIA H1N1 UPDATE: SEVENTH CASE CONFIRMED, BUT NO
ADDITIONAL PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES

REF: VIENNA 5191.

¶1. Austrian authorities report seven total H1N1 cases since the outbreak of the epidemic. Director for Public Health Hubert Hrabcik confirmed the seventh case, a woman from Salzburg who had returned from a visit to the U.S. Health authorities said that her case is "mild" and she is responding well to medication. As a precautionary measure, Austrian authorities treated all other passengers on the flight with "Tamiflu."

¶2. Although the first H1N1 case in April involved a passenger traveling through Mexico (reftel), five cases involved persons infected traveling from the U.S. to Austria, while one case was an in-country transmission. So far, all cases have had a full health recovery.

¶3. To contain any spread of H1N1, the Ministry of Health issued an ordinance on June 6 requiring airlines to forward to health authorities all passenger data for direct flights between the U.S./Canada and Austria (there are no direct flights between Austria and Mexico). All passengers are required to fill in their contact data in "Passenger Location Cards." Authorities delete these data after two weeks. Additionally, passengers traveling to or from highly infected regions receive H1N1 information material at airports and from travel agents, in which they are encouraged to self-report any influenza symptoms they have themselves or observe on the plane.

¶4. Despite WHO's decision to raise the pandemic warning level, Austrian health authorities remain unperturbed. Hrabcik said that as long as there are only "singular" cases in Europe and Austria, there is no need to set additional measures beyond registration and information obligations. Health Ministry spokeswoman Sigrid Rosenberger said that the Ministry's experts are implementing the national Pandemic Plan. In the current phase, a crisis committee has made preparations for a rapid deployment of influenza vaccinations and a treatment infrastructure for infected persons. Vaccines would be ordered only following a WHO recommendation.

¶5. Austria concluded a pre-contract with the U.S. pharmaceutical company Baxter to supply 16 million vaccine doses. Baxter recently announced that they have completed all H1N1 tests and begun vaccine production in its Czech production facility, with the first supplies ready as early as July. However, Rosenberger reported that the Health Ministry will not order the vaccine until the regular influenza season begins in late fall. In addition, the Ministry also has four million doses of antivirals (Tamiflu), and eight million masks in stock.

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